

team. It's therefore hard to understand why "family friendly" should be seen as a career limiting tag? You can have job satisfaction and work/life balance, but not in the same week.

Come back communism, all is forgiven

Once upon a time, the world divided into those that worked (the poor) and those that didn't (the idle rich). Somewhere along the line, this mutated into workers and bosses (less idle, but still rich). Then management and employees (staff v hourly paid). By the early 90s, somebody had concluded that the term "staff" was divisive and everybody had to become part of the "team" (and get with the programme). The latest development (from the States) appears to be that we are now all "associates" – job titles etc are very last century. But remember, whilst all associates are equal, some are more equal than others.

Alex & Dasha

You may not be aware that we have a couple of new associates on the Duckett team – Alex and Dasha. No nicknames yet.

Tech corner

All those who use TAS will be interested to hear that the latest release will use Pervasive as the database rather than the (very) old Bitrieve. Sue tells me that the implication of this is that is that several people will be able to work on the system at once, without the risk of crashing. I stand by to be impressed.



Carrot point

Most new associates leave within the first 3 years. Given the cost of the recruitment process, it's worth doing as much as you can as early as possible to retain such folk. The Carrot Book suggests you should run an interview at the 3 month point with the following 4 questions:

- Is the job what was promised at interview?
- Did you have any ways of doing things at your previous job that we could learn from?
- What do we do well?
- Have we done anything to make you want to leave?
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No more stress

The incidence of stress in the western world is rising all the time and government statistics report vast quantities of working hours lost to stress. Stress is the response to feeling out of control – working for an idiot, for instance. It seems unlikely that there are more idiot bosses than there used to be, so people are responding less well (choosing to be victims). Ability to withstand stress is called resilience and it's your choice as to how you react

<http://www.resiliencycenter.com/articles/stresshype.shtml>

Understanding accountants (not a new joke)

An architect, an artist and an accountant were discussing whether it was better to spend time with the wife or a mistress. The architect said he enjoyed time with his wife, building a solid foundation for an enduring relationship. The artist said he enjoyed time with his mistress, because of the passion and mystery he found there. The accountant said, "I like both." "Both?" The accountant replied "Yeah. If you have a wife and a mistress, they will each assume you are spending time with the other woman, and you can go to the office and get some work done."

Chairman of the bored (great pun)

As the financial world continues to fall apart, those left in employment are forced to hang onto their existing jobs, come what may. Given that 20% of the workforce is in the wrong job, this is likely to lead to the new phenomenon of "boreout" (being the opposite of burnout). Symptoms are:

- Constant tiredness
 - Exaggerated irritability
 - Listlessness
 - Increasingly marked introversion
- Pretty much the symptoms for all sorts of other things. The cure for boreout is, of course, to ignore it and get on with some proper work before you get fired (and have something to worry about). "Boreout! Overcoming workplace demotivation" by Phillippe Rothlin & Peter Werder.

Death & tax?

Inheritance tax is due to be a battle ground in the forthcoming election. People see it as unfair (taxing assets that have already been taxed) and the yields are likely to be lower (as house prices fall). Smart money (well, tax opinion) expects the threshold to rise to £500k each (maybe even £1m) from the current level of £312k. An article (in the Audi magazine, of all places) suggests that, within the next 20 years, we will have the technology to allow people to live 300+ years, making IHT completely irrelevant (at least for the next 299 years). So, death remains the ultimate tax planning scheme.

The death of leadership

Steven Sonsino works really hard (maybe too hard) trying to get us all interested in leadership issues, despite the fact that there's nothing new to say (or am I just boredout?). His current offering is energetic: <http://leadership.fm/thousands-read-about-and-853-actually-download-the-death-of-leadership-news-release/>

I have to confess to being one of those who has downloaded the report and I can recommend the organisation chart on page 24. But, he does go on a bit.

Pregnant pause

It's long been clear, even in the small business world, that you can't sack women for being pregnant. However, a recent ruling in Europe concluded that a woman who was undergoing IVF (egg fertilised, but not impregnated) wasn't pregnant. However, as only women can have IVF, firing her for trying is sex discrimination anyway. I have to say, I've never considered firing anybody for trying to get pregnant. It's the succeeding that troubles me. Item courtesy of Sophie Williams, a woman on maternity leave, but promising to be back at work soon.

Disclaimer

The carrot principal:

"Come into my office and I will eat you and spit out the bones."?

Don't forget www.chrisduckett.co.uk





Chris Duckett Limited

Network House , Thorn
Office Centre
Rotherwas
Hereford
HR2 6JT



Telephone [01432 370 572](tel:01432370572)

Email: clients@chrisduckett.co.uk

Website www.chrisduckett.co.uk